

*21When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. 22Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet 23and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live."*

*24So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. 25Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. 26She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. 27She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." 29Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" 31And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" 32He looked all around to see who had done it. 33But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. 34He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."*

*35While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" 36But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." 37He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. 38When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." 40And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" 42And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. 43He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.*

I first noticed the corn rows – strand upon strand of hair, intertwined. How long that must have taken. I had never before seen a woman whose hair was gray fixed up in that way. I was in the visiting room at Grafton Correctional Institution. She must be here to visit her grandson, I thought. Her life has now become intertwined with this place. How sad.

When visiting was over and we were leaving woman spoke to a female officer: Friend, these are my granddaughters, pointing to the young girls being held by another woman. I have always thought of that particular guard as being abrupt – not very approachable. But she called her friend – wanted her to share in her joy over her grandchildren. Like the strands of hair interwoven – lives were being intertwined as well. The guard smiled – spoke a warm greeting.

Intertwined. That is how the two stories about Jesus that Mark tells us this morning are arranged – intertwined. Woven – one wrapped around the other.

First there is the daughter of a leader of the synagogue. Her life has become intertwined with illness. When Jairus, the girl's father, saw Jesus he fell at Jesus' feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her so that she may be made well and live."

What would this father do for his daughter? Well this proud leader high up on the social scale became a beggar. Down on the ground, begging repeatedly. Jesus went with him.

But their journey was interrupted by a touch. A woman touched Jesus' cloak - but not just any woman. Though Mark gives her no name those who knew her story must have felt as sorry for her as I did that woman at the prison. Poor Mary, or Rebekah or Rachel. For this woman had been cut off from normal society for twelve years. She suffered from bleeding – not the normal once a month or so that healthy young women experience but continual hemorrhaging. According to Jewish religious law she could not have contact with others as long as she suffered from this condition. It would be like today being under continual quarantine – for twelve years! Poor Rachel.

But on this day she was breaking all the rules. In a crowd and then touching Jesus, for she thought, "If I but touch his clothes I will be made well."

Immediately Jesus perceived that power had gone forth from him and he turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched me?" The woman confessed – told Jesus her whole story of seeking help and getting none and becoming impoverished in the process. And Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

But even as Jesus spoke people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher further?" While Jesus had been listening to a nobody – this precious daughter of a leader of the people had died. Can you see how these lives had become intertwined? The way health care for the poor in our time gets

intertwined with how much government will cost us all or how much part time workers will cost a business or how much income doctors will make. Maybe some in that crowd dared to think the thought that this young girl's life was more precious than the life of this used up woman. Jesus should have rushed on by her but now it was too late. Don't bother the teacher any further.

But Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

You know the rest of the story, how Jesus went and took the corpse of that young girl by the hand and said, "Little girl, get up!" And she immediately got up and began to walk about.

Intertwined.

When Jesus encounters one on the lowest rung of the ladder of society or one on the highest there is touch. One reaching out to him – another being grasped by him. And sickness and death that were intertwined in those lives is replaced with the love and power and healing of God. And one who had no name is now called daughter by Jesus, her life forever intertwined with Jesus. And the daughter who was taken in death is the daughter now restored.

And you and I? None of us are as low and as outcast as that woman who had been hemorrhaging and none of us more loved than that daughter of Jairus. But we come here with pain and shame and disappointment and sickness intertwined with our lives. What will happen when you reach out and Jesus is placed in your hand? I do not know. But I do know that the word Jesus spoke to Jairus is spoken you, "Do not fear, only believe." For I know that Jesus is intertwining your life in his through faith. And intends to intertwine himself into the life of every single person you encounter.

I hope you will always remember that.